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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 RABAT 001285

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/30/2016  
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [MO](#)  
SUBJECT: DAS GRAY DISCUSSES GAZA EVENTS AND LIBYAN  
REINTEGRATION WITH MFA

REF: A. RABAT 1210  
[1](#)B. RABAT 1211  
[1](#)C. RABAT 1280

Classified By: Ambassador Thomas Riley for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY: In a meeting June 29 with visiting DAS Gordon Gray, Minister Delegate for Foreign Affairs Taieb Fassi Fihri expressed Morocco's concern over recent events in Gaza, explaining that Israeli actions were "too strong and extreme" and have complicated Morocco's position. Fassi Fihri warned against Hamas being marginalized or discredited too quickly by the international community, arguing that the international community should accompany the evolution of Hamas. DAS Gray highlighted key decisions taken by the US concerning Libya and Libya's reintegration into the international community. On Iran, Fassi Fihri discussed FM Benaissa's trip last month to Tehran, noting the clear message Benaissa delivered to Iran concerning their nuclear ambitions. END SUMMARY.

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Recent Actions Complicating Morocco's Position  
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[1](#)2. (C) On June 29, DAS Gordon Gray met with Minister Delegate for Foreign Affairs Taieb Fassi Fihri to discuss several regional issues, including recent events in Gaza and Libya's reintegration into the international community. Discussions on the Western Sahara reported Ref C. Ambassador and Poloffs joined DAS Gray, while Fassi Fihri was accompanied by MFA Director of Bilateral Affairs Youssef Amrani, MFA Director of American Affairs Salaheddine Tazi, and MFA Director of UN and International Organizations Nasser Bourita. Gray thanked Fassi Fihri for the GOM's support of the Israeli resolution at the UN Human Rights Council (Ref B). In response, Fassi Fihri explained that Morocco, like the US, would like to see the first meeting of the Council be successful and does not want a political issue to derail the Council's inaugural efforts.

[1](#)3. (C) While on the topic of Israel, Fassi Fihri seized the opportunity to express Morocco's concern over recent Israeli actions in Gaza. Fassi Fihri explained that the destroying of infrastructure, compounded with the beach air strike were "too strong and extreme," and will not help in the search for peace. Turning to Hamas, Fassi Fihri made it clear that Morocco "is not in love with Hamas," but argued that if Hamas

is marginalized or discredited too quickly by the international community, then there is a risk of Hamas going underground only to reemerge in the future as potentially a more serious problem. Fassi Fihri said he understands that the West can not talk to Hamas without the recognition of the three Quartet principles, but argued that the international community should accompany the evolution of Hamas, similar to Fatah in the 1960's, for two reasons. First, Hamas is present and they are here to stay. Second, if political Hamas is eliminated the result will be fertile ground for radical elements to rise and take charge of disaffected members of Hamas.

¶4. (C) Morocco's position vis-a-vis Israel and Palestine is very complex, and recent Israeli actions have put Morocco in a very difficult situation, Fassi Fihri said. Moroccan civil society and parliament have asked for a strong condemnation from the GOM, Fassi Fihri explained, but as of the meeting King Mohammed VI had not yet responded to their requests. Despite the developments in Gaza, Morocco still believes in giving dialogue a chance to succeed, Fassi Fihri said. Gray agreed, and encouraged Morocco, because of our common vision and goals, to play as constructive of a role as possible in this context.

¶5. (C) In the Arab-Israeli context the GOM is repeatedly asked to answer, both publicly and privately, two overarching questions, Fassi Fihri said. First, if Israel claims Hamas is not a viable interlocutor, then should Israel and the international community not help create a viable interlocutor in an effort to create a vibrant dialogue? The alternative to dialogue is defensive measures, as witnessed by recent actions in Gaza. Second, several political parties, most

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often the Party for Justice and Development (PJD), have asked if Israeli would accept the same three Quartet principles that Hamas is being asked to accept? Gray underscored the dangers posed by either side acting unilaterally, and the importance of all parties following the Roadmap, while avoiding actions that could escalate the conflict. Fassi Fihri added that Morocco finds its conversations with the Palestinian government very difficult because of its "two voices," and in this vein he pressed the US and international community to support Abu Mazen and his vision for peace.

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Libya's Reintegration  
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¶6. (C) Gray outlined to Fassi Fihri the USG's recent actions towards Libya, highlighting that by renouncing terrorism and weapons of mass destruction Libya has taken the necessary steps to help itself reintegrate into the international community. Libya's decisions show countries like Iran and North Korea that similar decisions on their part could lead to an end of their isolation from the international community. Fassi Fihri, in response, explained that Morocco prefers the normalization of relations with its neighbors in the region and thanked the USG for our efforts on Libya.

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Clear Message To Iran  
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¶7. (C) Turning to Iran, Fassi Fihri noted that FM Mohamed Benaissa on his recent trip to Tehran (NB: Benaissa paid an official visit to Tehran June 18 where he met Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and his Iranian counterpart. Ref A) delivered a strong and clear message to the Iranians. According to Fassi Fihri, FM Benaissa presented the last international community offer to Iran as an offer that can not be passed up because it is supported internationally. Benaissa believes that domestic competition between powers is creating Tehran's aggressive rhetoric, but is optimistic that Tehran will clearly understand the challenges that their

nuclear position poses. Describing Iranian President Ahmadinejad, Fassi Fihri (with help from Ambassador Amrani) said "he's totally out of context," but hoped that meetings with Turkey and Saudi Arabia would help the situation. Gray stressed the importance of Iran hearing the same strong and clear message from countries outside the P-5 and Europe, which demonstrates to Tehran that this is an international concern, not just the West's.

18. (U) Gray has cleared this cable.  
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